SPECIAL FEATURE NO. 3-1705 MAY 26, 1978
DAVID HYATT

(NOTE TO EDITORS: BOB HOPE BIRTHDAY: MAY 29)

BOB HOPE: "KING OF COMEDY"
(INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR:

TODAY, VOA PAYS TRIBUTE TO A MAN WHO HAS BROUGHT LAUGHTER TO MILLIONS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE GLOBE. HE HAS BEEN CALLED THE "KING OF COMEDY," "THE SERVICEMAN'S BEST FRIEND," AND "AMERICA'S AMBASSADOR OF GOODWILL." HE IS BOB HOPE -- SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OLD TODAY (MAY 29).

TAPE: CUT ONE -- "THANKS FOR THE MEMORY" - SNEAK (TOTAL TIME 1:47

VOICE:

HIS THEME SONG -- "THANKS FOR THE MEMORY" -- HAS BEEN HEARD IN THE FAR REACHES OF THE GLOBE. IT WAS FIRST RECORDED IN 1938 WITH SHIRLEY ROSS AND HAS BEEN CALLED A SORT OF INTERNATIONAL ANTHEM OF COMEDY:

TAPE CONTD: IN FULL AND FADE UNDER:

VOICE:

THE CELEBRATION OF BOB HOPE'S SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR DAYS HERE IN WASHINGTON, D.C. IT BEGAN LAST WEDNESDAY (MAY 24) AT THE WHITE HOUSE WHERE HUNDREDS OF SHOW BUSINESS FRIENDS FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS OF BOB HOPE'S LONG CAREER SHOWED UP TO WISH HIM WELL.

OVER THE YEARS BOB HOPE HAS KNOWN MANY PRESIDENTS -- EIGHT OF THEM. AND LAST WEDNESDAY HE MET NUMBER NINE -- JIMMY CARTER, WHO SAID:

TAPE: CUT TWO -- CARTER

"ALTHOUGH THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT BOB HAS BEEN TO THE WHITE HOUSE SINCE I'VE BEEN HERE, I FIGURED TODAY THAT I'VE BEEN IN OFFICE FOR FOUR HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE DAYS. AND WHEN I SPEND THREE MORE WEEKS, I WILL HAVE STAYED AS MANY NIGHTS IN THE WHITE HOUSE AS BOB HOPE HAS." (LAUGHTER)

VOICE:

BUT THE BIGGEST CELEBRATION CAME THURSDAY NIGHT AT THE KENNEDY CENTER IN WASHINGTON WHERE THOUSANDS GATHERED TO HONOR AMERICA'S ACKNOWLEDGED MASTER OF COMEDY. THE THREE-HOUR EXTRAVAGANZA WAS SPONSORED BY USO -- THE UNITED SERVICE ORGANIZATION -- AND FEATURED SONGS, DANCES AND COMEDY ROUTINES PERFORMED BY SOME OF HOLLYWOOD'S BEST KNOWN CELEBRITIES.

THE LIST OF STARS SEEMED ENDLESS: ELIZABETH TAYLOR, GEORGE C. SCOTT, TELLY SAVALAS, LUCILLE BALL, SAMMY DAVIS, JR., GEORGE BURNS, AND A HOST OF OTHERS. THEY ALL SANG "HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO BOB" AND "THANKS FOR THE MEMORY."

THE EVENING REACHED AN EMOTIONAL CLIMAX WITH GREETINGS SENT TO BOB FROM THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND, WHO SAID THAT BOB HOPE REPRESENTS "THE TRIUMPH OF LAUGHTER OVER DARKNESS." THE POPE AND PRINCE CHARLES ALSO SENT THEIR CONGRATULATIONS.

JOHN WAYNE APPEARED BY SPECIAL HOOKUP FROM NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA, WHERE HE IS RECOVERING FROM OPEN-HEART SURGERY, SAYING HE WAS HAPPY HE MADE IT TO BOB'S PARTY.

BOB HOPE WAS VISIBLY MOVED BY THE SPECIAL BIRTHDAY PARTY AS HE SAT IN THE PRESIDENTIAL BOX WITH HIS WIFE DOLORES, FIRST LADY ROSALYNN CARTER AND FORMER PRESIDENT AND MISSUS GERALD FORD.

THE THREE HOUR CELEBRATION WILL BE BROADCAST MONDAY NIGHT ON NATIONAL TELEVISION.

ONE REPORTER ASKED BOB HOW IT FEELS TO BE SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OLD:

<u>TAPE: CUT THREE -- HOPE</u>

"WELL, IT HAS JUST JUMPED ON ME ALL OF A SUDDEN. I DIDN'T REALIZE I WAS THAT OLD. MY GOODNESS I'VE GOT TO LEARN HOW TO BE THAT OLD. I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT."

VOICE:

BOB HOPE WAS BORN IN ELTHAM, ENGLAND ON MAY 29TH, 1903. HIS REAL NAME IS LESLIE TOWNES HOPE. HIS FATHER BROUGHT THE FAMILY TO CLEVELAND, OHIO, WHEN BOB WAS ONLY FOUR, AND THAT'S WHERE HE GREW UP.

BOB HOPE HAS BEEN IN SHOW BUSINESS FOR NEARLY FIFTY YEARS. THE MOVIES HE MADE IN THE FORTIES AND FIFTIES ARE STILL ACCLAIMED AS A HIGH POINT OF COMEDY. THE SO-CALLED "ROAD PICTURES" THAT HE MADE WITH THE LATE BING CROSBY ARE PARTICULARLY POPULAR EVEN TODAY. THEY INCLUDED THE ROAD TO ZANZIBAR, THE ROAD TO MOROCCO, SINGAPORE, UTOPIA, RIO, AND HONG KONG.

BOB HOPE STILL DISPLAYS LIMITLESS ENERGY AND DRIVE. WHEN ASKED ABOUT HIS UNFLAGGING HIGH SPIRITS, HE SAID:

TAPE: CUT FOUR -- HOPE

"I THINK IT'S WORK. I THINK IT'S JUST GOING ALONG DOING THINGS AND HAVING LAUGHS, AND ACTIVITY. I GET A LOT OF EXERCISE AND PLAY A LOT OF GOLF AND RUN OVER TO N-B-C AND HAVE A HAPPY GROUP AROUND ME. WE HAVE A LOT OF FUN."

VOICE:

BOB HOPE HAS A JOKE FOR EVERY OCCASION. LAST THURSDAY, THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS SET ASIDE AN HOUR TO HONOR HIM. WHEN ASKED WHAT HIS REACTION WAS TO THIS, BOB HOPE SAID:

TAPE: CUT FIVE -- HOPE

"WELL, IT'S JUST A LITTLE TOO MUCH. I TOLD THEM THAT IT'S HARD TO SIT THERE AND HAVE THESE PEOPLE SAY THESE WONDERFUL THINGS ABOUT HOW GREAT YOU ARE, BUT THEY FINALLY CONVINCED ME."

VOICE:

BOB HOPE IS PERHAPS BEST KNOWN FOR HIS USO TOURS. EACH YEAR -- FROM 1942 TO 1972 -- BOB HOPE ASSEMBLED A STAR-STUDDED TROUPE AND TRAVELED AROUND THE WORLD, ENTERTAINING AMERICAN SERVICEMEN. A FAMOUS AMERICAN WRITER -- JOHN STEINBECK -- ONCE WROTE: "WHEN THE TIME FOR RECOGNITION OF SERVICE TO THE NATION

IN WARTIME COMES TO BE CONSIDERED, BOB HOPE SHOULD BE HIGH ON THE LIST." SENATOR STUART SYMINGTON PRAISED BOB HOPE FOR INSTILLING "BOTH PRIDE AND A SENSF OF PURPOSE TO THOSE SERVING THEIR COUNTRY FAR FROM HOME." DURING WORLD WAR II, BOB AND HIS TROUPE OF ENTERTAINERS COVERED MOST OF THE OVERSEAS BASES, INCLUDING AFRICA, ENGLAND, WALES, IRELAND, SCOTLAND, SICILY, ALASKA, THE ALEUTIANS, AND THE PACIFIC THEATRE. HERE BOB HOPE RECALLS THE TRIP HE THOUGHT WAS THE MOST EXCITING:

TAPE: CUT SIX -- HOPE

"THEY WERE ALL PRETTY EXCITING, BUT I THINK THE 1943 TRIP TO AFRICA -- ENGLAND AND AFRICA -- BECAUSE WE WERE INITIATED INTO BOMBING. I WAS IN SALENO WHEN THEY WERE BOMBING THE BAY, AND I WAS UNDER THE BED. WE RAN INTO A LOT OF STUFF. WHEN WE GOT TO ALGIERS, WE WERE LUCKY ENOUGH TO MEET GENERAL IKE (EISENHOWER). AND HE SAID I UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE BEEN IN SOME BOMBING. YOU'LL BE ALRIGHT HERE TONIGHT. AND SO...ABOUT FOUR THIRTY IN THE MORNING, HERE THEY COME, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THREE MONTHS. AND WE HAD TO GO DOWN INTO THE WINE CELLAR AND SIT THERE UNDER THE HOTEL. BUT IT WAS PRETTY EXCITING, AND I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT. IN FACT, THERE WERE MOMENTS WHEN YOU DIDN'T KNOW IF YOU WERE IN THE RIGHT BUSINESS."

VOICE:

BOB HOPE CONSIDERS HIS HUMOR TO BE INTERNATIONAL AND, IN FACT, MANY OF BOB HOPE'S MOVIES HAVE BEEN DUBBED -- OR TRANSLATED -- INTO SEVERAL LANGUAGES:

TAPE: CUT SEVEN -- HOPE

"I'VE WATCHED MYSELF IN PORTUGUESE, FRENCH, I GUESS SPANISH. BING AND MYSELF -- WE DID THE ROAD TO UTOPIA IN PORTUGUESE. I SAW THAT DOWN IN MONTEVIDEO. THAT WAS PRETTY FUNNY TO ME. BUT THEY DO SOME FANTASTIC WORK IN DUBBING THESE PICTURES. THEY GET A FELLOW THAT MATCHES YOUR VOICE AND HAS YOUR TIMING AND EVERYTHING. I HEARD IT IN ITALIAN. I SAW ONE OF MY PICTURES IN ITALY, IN ROME, AND I SENT FOR THE FELLOW TO CONGRATULATE HIM. HE WAS SO GOOD. YOU KNOW HE HAS TO BE GOOD HIMSELF TO GET IT IN THERE AND NOT MISS THE POINTS."

VOICE:

BOB HOPE HAS RECEIVED MORE THAN A THOUSAND AWARDS FOR HUMANITARIAN AND PROFESSIONAL EFFORTS. HE HAS BEEN GIVEN THE PRESIDENTIAL GOLD MEDAL, THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR, AND

OVER FORTY HONORARY DEGREES. ONE WRITER NOTED THAT BOB HOPE HAS HIGHER PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL STANDING THAN ANY ENTERTAINER IN AMERICAN HISTORY. FORMER PRESIDENT GERALD FORD AGREES:

TAPE: CUT EIGHT -- FORD

"BOB HAS SPENT A LIFETIME, AS WE ALL KNOW, BRINGING LAUGHTER AND MANY HAPPY HOURS TO AT LEAST TWO GENERATIONS OF GRATEFUL AMERICANS. BOB IS TRULY THE COMEDIAN OF THIS CENTURY AND ANY OTHER."

VOICE:

BUT PERHAPS THE CROWNING GLORY OF HIS LONG CAREER IS YET TO COME. THURSDAY NIGHT, THE PRESIDENT OF THE USO -- THE ORGANIZATION THAT BOB HOPE HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH FOR MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS -- ANNOUNCED THAT A NEW MULTIMILION DOLLAR COMPLEX TO BE BUILT IN WASHINGTON WILL BE NAMED THE "BOB HOPE-USO CENTER" AND WILL SERVE AS A PERMANENT MEMORIAL TO THE MAN WHO MADE MILLIONS LAUGH. TO BOB HOPE WE SAY CONGRATULATIONS--AND HAPPY 75TH BIRTHDAY.

TAPE: CUT NINE -- "THANKS FOR THE MEMORY" - IN FULL, THEN USE AS NEEDED

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BML/RTD